

The Backpack Program

Shared Harvest Foodbank's signature program to address childhood hunger.

2018-2019 SCHOOL YEAR REPORT



Together We Can Change Children's Lives

Many years ago, I worked with homeless families to help them overcome barriers to self-sufficiency. I recall one experience in particular that helped me to see that children are often innocent bystanders of circumstances they have no control over.

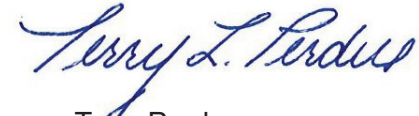
During a routine shelter inspection, I found myself frozen in disbelief, staring at two little girls sitting on the floor, digging into a sheet cake while their mother lay unconscious beside them. Angela had yet again succumbed to her addiction while her daughters were left to fend for themselves. Surrounded by trash and drug paraphernalia, icing matted onto their hands and hair, they looked up at me with hollow eyes. They had found a cake given to them from a food pantry the week before. It was the only thing they had eaten for three days. No, cake is not a healthy choice, but they knew it would fill their bellies.

It is hard to understand the challenges that people in poverty face. More so, the ways they cope with them. Yet, I've discovered that just as these little girls did what they had to do to survive, people in poverty do the same. Angela reached out to a shelter for help, but she still felt so overwhelmed, distressed and powerless against her addiction that she turned to the only thing she knew would provide relief.

While this is an extreme example, many children who receive a bag of food through the Backpack program are in families who are simply enduring, day to day. We intentionally select the types of food that go into the bags, knowing that the parents aren't always available and often working multiple jobs to make ends meet. We strive to include food that the children can prepare on their own, if necessary.

One in five kids in our community are food insecure, lacking consistent access to food. Since its inception in 2007, the Backpack program has made a tremendous impact in the lives of thousands of children but there is still much to be done. With this report, we hope to convey our deepest gratitude to our volunteers, sponsors, and donors who make this program possible. Together, we can change these children's lives, one bag of food at a time.

Affectionately,



Terry Perdue
Executive Director



Why The BackPack Program?



Students from Head Start to 5th grade are targeted with the BackPack Program because this is a critical time for brain growth and development. At around age 12, our brains stop growing so without enough nutrition to feed this growth and development these students will face a compromised ability to compete academically, physically and socially with their better fed peers.

There is compelling evidence that under-nutrition in any form impacts behavior, school performance, and overall cognitive development. Continuous low nutritional intake affects psychological factors such as motivation, attentiveness and emotional expression. This has a negative effect on developmental processes including parent-child interaction, attachment, play and learning.

How Backpack Works

The Backpack Program equips a child with a simple bag of food, providing six meals and snacks for consumption over the weekend when other resources may not be available. To refer a child to the Backpack program, the child should exhibit at least one of these indicators:

Behaviors: Rushing food lines; Extreme hunger on Monday morning; Quickly eating all of the food served and asking for more; Saving/hoarding/stealing food to take home for themselves and/or a sibling; Lingered around for or asking for seconds; Asking classmates for food they don't want.

Physical: Extreme thinness; Puffy/swollen skin; Dry/cracked lips; Dry and itchy eyes.

Performance: Excessive absences and/or tardiness; Repetition of a grade; Chronic sickness; Short attention span/inability to concentrate; Chronic behavior problems.

Once a child has been identified as exhibiting signs of chronic hunger, they remain on the program for the entire school year. There are several advantages in the way the **Backpack Program** address the needs of hungry children: Referrals are made by school staff, who are in a position to identify hungry children; Children are not stigmatized because the food is given to them discretely; Food gets directly and immediately into the hands of hungry children; Children receive food that is appropriate for them to prepare and meets many nutritional requirements; Children receive food with no questions asked.



The Backpack Community

Butler County

St. Mary's of Oxford
serves Talawanda

Darke County

Grace Resurrection
Community Center
serves Ansonia,
Arcanum-Butler,
Bradford, Greenville,
Mississinawa Valley,
Tri-Village & Versailles

Miami County

Tipp City Church of
the Nazarene serves
Tipp City

Butler County

Educational
Services Center
serves Fairfield,
Hamilton, Lakota,
Madison, Middletown
& Monroe

SALEM ELEMENTARY WARREN COUNTY

I love that
we have a way to support
our children in need even
when they aren't in school.
That is one less thing
that they need worry about
and they can focus
on being a kid.

Warren County

Joshua's Place
serves Kings

Butler County

A generous couple
serves Ross

Warren County

Panther's Backpack
serves
Little Miami

Butler County

Edgewood
Ministerial
Association
serves Edgewood

Warren County

Warriors
BackPack
serves
Lebanon

Warren County

Springboro Community
Assistance Center
serves Springboro

ROSA PARKS ELEMENTARY BUTLER COUNTY

*It is so
wonderful
to see our
students'
responses to
getting the
weekend food
bags as well as
new clothes
and shoes.
Their little faces
just light up!
It is nice to see
them proud of
how they look.*

Help comes from near...



The **Butler County United Way** continues its support of the Backpack Program and was our first funder when the project was adopted by their Women's Initiative in 2008.



The **Altrusa International of Hamilton** received a grant from the Altrusa International Foundation to purchase children's books for first through fourth grades in the Hamilton City School District. Members of the club spent an afternoon placing the books in bags to be distributed through Shared Harvest Foodbank's Backpack program. In addition, the Altrusa Club has been a long-time supporter of the Backpack Program through funds raised at their annual Adult Spelling Bee.



Kiwanis®
CLUB OF OXFORD, OHIO

The **Kiwanis Club of Oxford** is committed to responding to the unique needs of the greater Oxford community. And has supported the Backpack Program for the Talawanda School District for the past seven years with grants and a fund drive of its members over the holidays.



... and far

Food banks are crucial for providing nourishment to millions of Americans, and milk is one of the most requested items. Milk is the top food source for three of the nutrients most likely to be missing in kids' diets – calcium, vitamin D and potassium. **The Great American Milk Drive** provided funds to help purchase shelf stable fluid milk to be included in the food bags given to students participating in Shared Harvest Foodbanks Backpack Program.

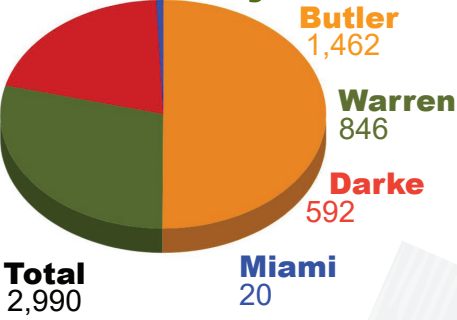
America's dairy community has provided over 31 million servings of milk nationwide!



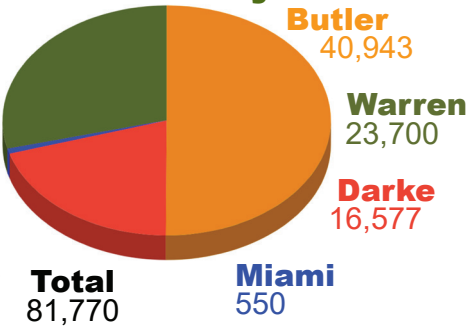
Red Nose Day is a campaign with the mission to end child poverty by funding programs that keep children safe, healthy, and educated. Red Nose brings people together to laugh and have fun, all while raising life-changing cash for the children that need it the most. Since its debut in 2015, they have raised over \$150 million and have positively impacted over 16 million children in America, and around the world. To bring it home, the Red Nose Campaign has contributed over \$55,000 to Shared Harvest Foodbank's Backpack Program over the past five years, helping us serve nearly 3,000 kids with food each weekend during the school year. Find out more at www.rednoseday.org

The Numbers

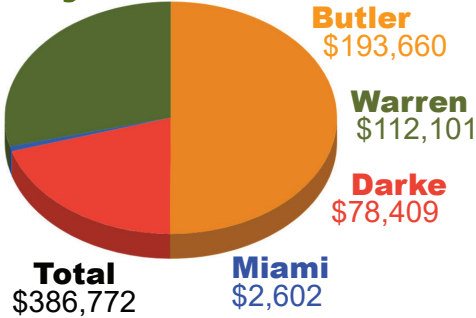
CHILDREN SERVED WEEKLY by COUNTY



BAGS of FOOD SERVED by COUNTY



COST of FOOD by COUNTY



**BRADFORD ELEMENTARY
DARKE COUNTY**

SOME OF THE CHILDREN ARE VERY ANXIOUS TO GET THEIR BAGS ON FRIDAYS, AND EVEN COME INTO THE OFFICE ON FRIDAYS AND ASK IF TODAY IS THE DAY THEY GET THEIR BAGS, WHICH INDICATES TO ME THERE IS A NEED FOR FOOD IN THEIR HOUSE.

Evaluation Results

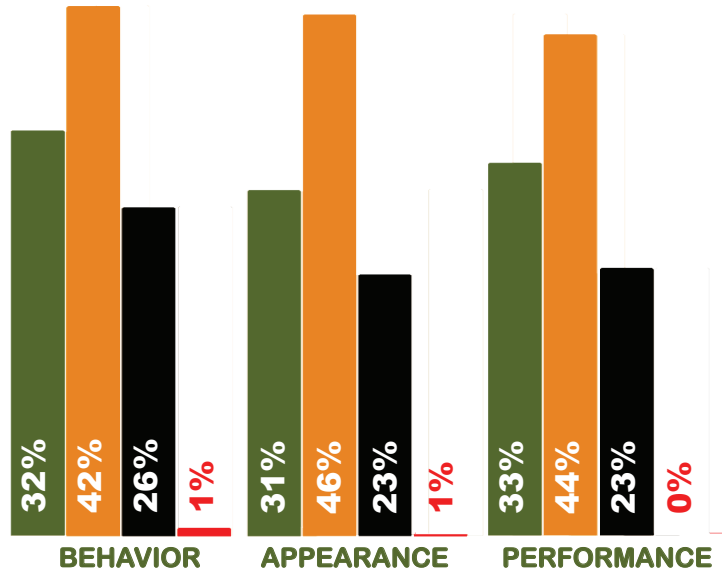
CREEKVIEW ELEMENTARY - BUTLER COUNTY

My students who received backpacks through the program were always super excited to have food over the weekend & would say 'Yay! My mommy doesn't have to worry about food for us.' Thank you so much for this amazing program!

VERSAILLES ELEMENTARY - DARKE COUNTY

My student who received this looked forward to it each week and shared it was all used each weekend.

Thank you!



Improved
Very Much

Improved
Somewhat

Same

Got Worse

Each the end of each school year, we send evaluation forms to teachers, counselors and administrators to help us understand the impact of the BackPack Program for their students. Students are referred to the BackPack Program because they have exhibited at least one of the signs indicating chronic hunger related to behavior, appearance and/or performance. Of 800 evaluation forms distributed, we received a 57% response, indicating observation of very much or somewhat improved behavior (73%); appearance (77%) and/or classroom performance (77%).

We Can't Do This Alone



As part of the annual Give with Liberty campaign, Liberty Mutual spent the day at Shared Harvest, assembling bags of food for the Backpack Program.

As part of their annual employee engagement the Miller-Coors Brewery called all hands-on deck to load bags with snacks that the company purchased for inclusion in the backpacks of the children participating in Shared Harvest Foodbank's Backpack Program.

We Can't Do This Without YOU!



AMANDA ELEMENTARY - BUTLER COUNTY

MY STUDENT WAS UNABLE TO FOCUS
ON MONDAY DUE TO HUNGER AND
EXHAUSTION...AND WAS HOARDING
FOOD FROM LUNCH AND
NOW NO LONGER DOES THAT.

PLEASE CONSIDER
SPONSORING A CHILD FOR
THE BACKPACK PROGRAM

\$5 sponsors one child one WEEKEND

\$19 sponsors one child one MONTH

\$150 sponsors one child for
THE WHOLE SCHOOL YEAR

USE THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE

or visit
www.SharedHarvest.org

Click on "Donate Now"
&
Designate Backpack Program



**HUNGER IS NOT A CHOICE.
GIVING IS.**

5901 Dixie Highway
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www.sharedharvest.org
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